

1 Thematic Review

A thematic review of falls was undertaken at Somerset Foundation Trust

5% of all falls that occurred in Somerset Foundation Trust therapeutic settings were reviewed over a 12-month period.

47 falls were scrutinised.

It was recognised that learning and recommendations from the review were also relevant for health and social care services.

2 Findings

All falls occurred indoors.

20/47 falls occurred in patients in 80-89 age range and involved **8** people.

18 of the falls occurred during rehab- loss of balance when engaging with therapist.

6 falls occurred whilst transferring between furniture e.g. moving from bed to a chair.

5 falls related to broken furniture.

3 Postural hypotension

Postural hypotension, also known as orthostatic hypotension (OH) was identified as significantly contributing to

- from bed or standing to the floor.
- falls from lying or sitting for a length of time.

Identified causes of OH were dehydration, long term bed rest, medical conditions e.g. Parkinson's disease and some medications.

4 Other Factors

Sarcopenia is the age-related progressive loss of muscle mass and strength.

The main symptom of the condition is muscle weakness.

Changes to vision.

5 Recommendations

Increase the opportunities for planned strength and balance exercise during personal care and activities programmes.

Ensure people are up to date with routine Optician and Audiology reviews.

Identify if the people you support have any of the contributing factors listed above. Can care delivery be adapted to mitigate against the risks of falling?

6 Recommendations

Identify people who may be starting to experience changes in their vision and/or hearing and arrange an assessment.

Request regular medication and "top to toe" multidisciplinary medical reviews so that people and their carers are in better control of their condition(s).

Ensure people have access to appropriate footwear.

7 Falls Prevention

Focus on near misses – this is an opportunity to be proactive.

When analysing falls do you consider lighting, time of day, levels of supervision and the contributing factors in this review?

Focus on increasing levels of hydration, this has been proven to significantly reduce falls.

[NHS England » Case study: improving hydration awareness amongst care home residents in Torbay and South Devon](#)